

INDIANA

COLLEGE APPLICATION DAY

School Manual
2015 Edition

COLLEGE PLANNING



CAREER SUCCESS

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About the Campaign

The American College Application Campaign (ACAC), an effort of the American Council on Education (ACE), is a national initiative to increase the number of first-generation and low-income students who pursue a postsecondary education. The purpose is to help high school seniors navigate the college admissions process and ensure each participating student submits at least one admissions application.

In Indiana, College Application Day is part of the state's annual **College GO! Week** campaign. College Application Day is supported by an advisory council and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. Learn More Indiana, an initiative of the Commission, facilitates College GO! Week and provides materials. For more information about College GO! Week or Learn More Indiana, please visit www.LearnMoreIndiana.org.

In 2014, Indiana's College Application Day will be held on **October 28** (although schools are permitted to use an alternative date). Many Indiana colleges, as well as colleges nationwide, have priority scholarship deadlines of November 1. At local College Application Day events across the state, high school seniors will complete college applications online with assistance from school staff and volunteers. They will then sign up for their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) personal identification number (PIN). As students depart the event, they will receive information about Indiana's FAFSA assistance programs taking place in February to ensure students are prepared to meet the state's March 10 financial aid filing deadline.

Responsibilities of Participating High Schools

High schools implementing a successful College Application Campaign event at their school will include the following as part of their initiative:

- **Hosting a program** during the school day that is open to any student interested in applying with a focus on engaging first-generation students, low-income students, and students who may otherwise not apply to college. Some schools may host more than one day, depending on the size of the senior class.
- **Convening a school team** comprised of staff and community members.
- **Advertising** the event, or engaging a community partner to assist with this task.
- **Ensuring that students are prepared** to participate in the event (essays are completed prior to the program, students have researched the institutions to which they want to apply, etc.).
- **Engaging the local community**, students, families, and others through volunteer opportunities, information letters, and advertising the program.
- **Collecting simple data** and reporting to Learn More Indiana following the event.
- **Following up with students** after the event to ensure applications submitted are complete (transcripts, college entrance exam scores, letters of recommendation, submitting a complete FAFSA, etc.).

Building Your School Team

A high school's school team should consist of at least a school counselor or assistant principal. Ideally, teachers, all counselors, other administrators and student leaders will also participate. Schools with a Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program should include all JAG steering team members and a JAG student.

A school should also consider engaging outside stakeholders to maximize the impact of the event. Community partners can advertise the event, recruit volunteers, provide in-kind donations, etc. Potential community partners include:

- Indiana College Success Coalition members (see LearnMoreIndiana.org/coalitions to contact your county's coalition)
- Admissions representatives from local colleges (two-year and four-year)
- Local business leaders

- Local Chamber of Commerce
- College access initiatives (federally-funded, state-funded, or community-based)
- Faith-based community
- Non-profit organizations such as the YMCA, 4H, Boys and Girls Club, etc.
- PTA and other parents/family members who want to be engaged in the process
- Student leaders in your high school
- Retired school personnel
- Local government officials or elected representatives

The school team will make a plan for:

- Preparing students in class or out of class. English classes may want to focus on college essays, for example. Students should know about upcoming SAT and ACT tests and have resources for studying.
- Communicating with parents, including sending home a College Application Information sheet (available at CollegeGoWeekIndiana.org).
- Communicating with seniors.
- Recruiting volunteers.
- Logistics for the day of the event (computer space, printing hand outs for students, etc.)
- Thanking volunteers for their time.
- Following up with students.
- Reporting data to Learn More Indiana.

Materials & Suggested Event Procedure

Learn More Indiana and the American College Application Campaign have provided materials for schools to use during College Application Day. All materials are available on the College GO! Week website (www.CollegeGoWeekIndiana.org).

The materials can be used in the following way:

- Several weeks prior to the event, send home the **Information Letter for Parents** and the **College Application Information** worksheet. Encourage students to complete the College Application Information sheet before attending the event.
- As students arrive at the event, give them the **Student Instructions** handout.
- As students complete their applications, instruct them to write down additional items they need to provide to colleges on the Student Instruction handout (such as transcript, SAT or ACT scores, etc.)
- When students complete applications, instruct them to obtain their FAFSA PIN at <http://pin.ed.gov>. Then give them a **FAFSA handout** and instruct them to write their PIN on the handout and keep it in a safe location.
- Before students exit, ask them to sign the **Sign-out Sheet**.
- After the event, assign someone to collect the data from the Sign-out Sheet and report it to Learn More Indiana via the **Data Reporting Sheet**.

School Team & Volunteer Tasks

Although familiarity with the college application process is a plus, it is not required for someone to fulfill a useful task and have a meaningful volunteer experience at a participating high school. Here are a few tasks that volunteers (or school team members) could contribute to the initiative at a high school:

- Post directional signs in the school for the event. Good signage is key to reminding students of the event and getting them to the right place.
- Wear college gear and encourage students that they can complete college.
- Greet students as they arrive to the computer lab. Ensure that they have a completed College Application Information sheet (available at www.CollegeGoWeekIndiana.org).

- Help students find **<http://www.in.gov/collegegoweek/2471.htm>** and begin an application by clicking on the pencil icon next to their college of choice. It is a good idea to bookmark this URL on all computers before the event begins. If the school does not have enough computers or stable online service, the counselor office should be prepared with paper applications. Volunteers, in that case, can hand out applications.
- Guide students through the college application process and help answer any questions students may have, regardless of where the student wishes to apply.
- Monitor printers to ensure that any applications that need to be printed remain in order and replenish the paper supply as needed.
- Help ensure students register for the FAFSA PIN after they submit their college application(s) at **<http://pin.ed.gov>**.
- Share personal college experiences with students, as requested.
- Hand out materials to students after they complete their college application(s) including the FAFSA handout (available at www.CollegeGoWeekIndiana.org).
- Assist students in listing the items they still need to provide, such as a high school transcript (available for free via e-Transcript), recommendation letters, SAT or ACT scores, etc.
- Congratulate each student on applying to college!

Additional Support

Thank you for participating in Indiana's College Application Day. In Indiana, this initiative of the American College Application Campaign is facilitated and supported by Learn More Indiana. Additional support is available by contacting Learn More Indiana at info@learnmore.org.

Support materials for College Application Day, student goals for College GO! Week, worksheets and activities for students in grades K-12, and College GO! Week promotional materials are available at **www.CollegeGoWeekIndiana.org**.

More information about Indiana's FAFSA events and resources is available at **www.CashforCollegeIndiana.org**. FAFSA Friday will be held February 20, 2015 at noon and 6 p.m. (EST) at **www.FafsaFriday.org**. College Goal Sunday will be held at over 40 locations across the state on February 22, 2015 at 2 p.m. (local time).